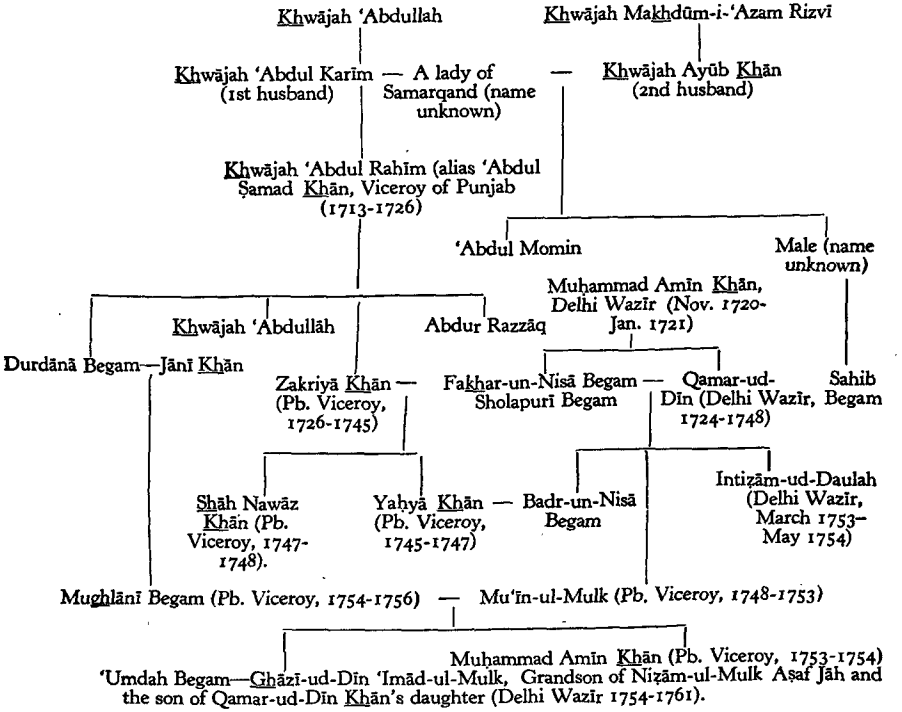
MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM, THE GOVERNOR OF LAHORE

(1754 TO 1756)

1. INTRODUCTION

MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM was the wife of the famous Punjab Viceroy, Mu'īn-ul-Mulk, popularly known as Mīr Mannū, the son of Nawāb Qamar-ud-Dīn Khān, the Wazīr of Delhi (1724-48). She was equally well connected on her mother's side as will be clear from the following table[1] :—


Khwājah 'Abdullah
Khwājah Makhdūm-i-'Azam Rizvī
Khwājah 'Abdul Karīm (1st husband)
A lady of Samarqand (name unknown)
Khwājah Ayūb Khān (2nd husband)
Khwājah 'Abdul Rahīm (alias 'Abdul Ṣamad Khān, Viceroy of Punjab (1713-1726)
'Abdul Momin
Male (name unknown)
Muhammad Amīn Khān, Delhi Wazīr (Nov. 1720-Jan. 1721)
Khwājah 'Abdullāh
Abdur Razzāq
Durdānā Begam
Jānī Khān
Zakriyā Khān (Pb. Viceroy, 1726-1745)
Fakhar-un-Nisā Begam Sholapurī Begam
Qamar-ud-Dīn (Delhi Wazīr, 1724-1748)
Sahib Begam
Shāh Nawāz Khān (Pb. Viceroy, 1747-1748).
Yaḥyā Khān (Pb. Viceroy, 1745-1747)
Badr-un-Nisā Begam
Intiẓām-ud-Daulah (Delhi Wazīr, March 1753–May 1754)
Mughlānī Begam (Pb. Viceroy, 1754-1756)
Mu'īn-ul-Mulk (Pb. Viceroy, 1748-1753)
Muhammad Amīn Khān (Pb. Viceroy, 1753-1754)
'Umdah Begam
Ghāzī-ud-Dīn 'Imād-ul-Mulk, Grandson of Niẓām-ul-Mulk Aṣaf Jāh and the son of Qamar-ud-Dīn Khān's daughter (Delhi Wazīr 1754-1761).

1. *'Imād-i-Sa'ādat*, 34*a*-36*a*; Anand Ram, 304-305; Shāh Yūsuf, 54*b*-55*a*; *Miftāḥ-ut-Tawārīkh*, 316; *Ma'āsir-ul-Umarā*, iii. 886.

She was a lady of remarkable address and daring, and played such an important part in the politics of the Punjab from 1753 to 1757 that she was the pivot round which centred all the political affairs during the most critical period in the life of the Delhi Empire. Her diplomacy was vigorous and effective, steady and sturdy, and she readily succeeded in achieving her object. She possessed a powerful personality, and played a domineering role in all her dealings. If she was not implicitly obeyed when coaxing or cajoling, she was terrible in her wrath. Ambitious as she was, she loved power, which sometimes exceeded the bounds of propriety and at last ruined not only her prestige, position, and even property, but also that of her father-in-law and the Delhi Empire. Her story is a tale of woe which befell the Punjab and Delhi alike.

2. DEATH OF MU'ĪN-UL-MULK (3RD NOVEMBER 1753)

MU'ĪN-UL-MULK, after his victory over Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī in March 1748, was appointed by the dying Muḥammad Shāh to the Viceroyalty of the Punjab in view of his vigorous character which enabled him to check further inroads of the Afghan invader, and to crush the Sikhs, who had been steadily acquiring power. If Muḥammad Shāh had ever displayed any far-sighted statesmanship, it was in ordering Mu'īn's appointment to the Punjab, the frontier province of the Mughal Empire, then liable to foreign peril and internal insecurity.

During the short period of Mu'īn's office from 1748 to 1753, Aḥmad Shāh led two invasions, in 1749 and 1751. On these two occasions the Mughal Viceroy fought single-handed, without receiving any assistance whatsoever from his master at Delhi. The second invasion lasted six months, and ultimately Mu'īn was defeated. But his pleasing personality, ready wit and frankness of manners had saved him his life and office. Abdālī confirmed him in his post on his behalf and retired to Afghanistan.

He was equally successful in checking the power of the Sikhs. He maintained a continuous campaign against them, and almost brought their lawless activities to an end. However he suddenly died on the 3rd November 1753 in the prime of life, under rather suspicious circumstances. The eye-witness Miskīn, to whom we shall have occasion to refer frequently in these pages, and who, on this occasion, was in attendance upon Mu'īn, gives a remarkable description of his death, the revolt of the soldiery and the Begam's winning them over. He says: "Nawāb Ṣāhib (Mu'īn-ul-Mulk) stayed for sometime at the village Tilakpur, on the bank of the river (Ravi), eight kos from Lahore. One day, at this place, in the month of Muḥarram, he mounted a horse to go hunting. A little while before he had sent out Khwājah Mirzā Khān,

with a few other Mughalia Jamadars to repress the Sikhs. On his return from hunting he halted in a fort[1] built by him..." The same afternoon Mu'īn-ul-Mulk put his horse to a gallop over an open field to join his troops, who lay encamped at a short distance. All of a sudden he was taken ill. The doctors tried their best to bring about his recovery, but "he died a little after mid-night. The strange thing was that the colour of his body from the face to the chest had turned blue. This sad occurrence caused a heart-rending crying and bewailing in the whole army. At this time the Begam Ṣāhiba, entrusting the body of the Nawāb to the custody [of some reliable persons], opened the doors of the treasury and kept herself busy for three days and nights in paying the wages of the soldiers.[2] On the fourth day Bhikārī Khān said that he would take the Nawāb's corpse to Delhi, while the Begam insisted on taking it to Lahore. This caused a quarrel between them. Bhikārī Khān thereupon appointed 500 of his men to guard the corpse and raised the standard of rebellion. The Begam was surprised at his conduct and she summoned all the chiefs before her. Accordingly all the Indian Sardars came and rendered submission to her; but the Mughalia troops had been seduced by Bhikārī Khān to his side. The Begam, therefore, sent for Qāsim Khān, who was ordered to win over the Mughalia troops by any means he could. Qāsim Khān said that he would bring all the captains (of the Mughalias) by promising them favours, but in his absence the corpse was to be guarded. The Begam posted me and my companions to this duty. On our arrival, Bhikārī Khān's guard left the corpse and departed, and we took up our position there. In the meanwhile Qāsim Khān brought all the Mughals to wait upon the Begam; but Khwājah Mirzā remained on the side of Bhikārī Khān with 300 horsemen. The Begam then marched to Lahore (with the corpse) and entered the city."[3]

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1. In the village Awan. 'Alī-ud-Dīn, 112b.

2. "The soldiery rose in revolt against Muḥammad Amīn (Mu'īn's son) and the Mughlānī Begam, clamouring for their pay, which was several months in arrears, and they did not allow her even to bury the dead body of the Nawāb for two days. The Begam paid the soldiers from her own treasury three lakhs of rupees, and buried her husband's corpse on the third day at Ghora Nakhas, in the building of Abdul Raḥīm, son-in-law of Abdul Samad Khān." Khushwaqt Rai, 88.

3. Miskīn, 89-90. cf. Farah Bakhsh, 33b; *Khazāna-i-'Āmīra*, 98; Siyar, iii. 50; *Tārīkh-i-Muzaffarī*, 89a; Khushwaqt Rai, 88; Aḥmad Shāh, 869; *Aḥwāl-i-Ādīna Beg*, 54b; *Tārīkh-i-Aḥmad*, 9; *Tārīkh-i-Salāṭīn-i-Afghānān*, 156; Sarkar i. 437. ("He (Mu'īn) was buried near Shahīd Ganj where the remains of his tomb may still be seen. In the reign of Sher Singh, the Sikhs in a moment of religious frenzy, dismantled the building, dug out the remains of Mīr Mannū and scattered them to the winds." *Lahore District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 28).

3. THE BABY-VICEROY APPOINTED TO THE PUNJAB (JANUARY 1754)

THE news of Mu'īn's death reached Delhi on the 12th November,[1] and the Emperor Aḥmad Shāh on the 13th appointed his three-year old son Maḥmūd Khān as Viceroy of the two provinces of Lahore and Multan. The robes of honour were conferred on the Prince in the Dīwān-i-Khās, and quite in the fitness of things, the three-year old baby Warden of the North-Western marches was provided with a two-year old deputy in the person of Muḥammad Amīn Khān, son of the late Mu'īn-ul-Mulk, for whom a Khil'at and jewels were sent through Mīr Jamīl-ud-Dīn Khān. The actual administration was, however, placed under the control of Mumin Khān, but the real control lay in the hands of the Begam.[2]

The Punjab had, however, formed part of the Afghan kingdom since 1752, and the Viceroy derived his real power from Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī and not from Aḥmad Shāh of Delhi. The Begam was not satisfied at receiving a formal nomination from Delhi; but, in order to retain her son in office, she looked to the Durrānī Emperor for confirmation. The Deputy, Mumin Khān was also not certain of retaining his office until he had received formal orders from the Afghan king. Both of them therefore offered their submission to Jahān Khān, the Governor of Peshawar, who then lay encamped at Hasan Abdāl, requesting him to communicate with his master in Kandhar. As a result of these negotiations, Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī appointed Muḥammad Amīn Khān Governor of the Punjab, and Mu'min Khān as his Deputy, about the end of January, 1754. This occasion was celebrated with great rejoicing.[3]

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1. The court chronicler of Delhi recorded:—

"Mu'īn always waged war with the Sikhs.... He was a valiant hero. His presence in Lahore, the frontier on that side of the country, where there was the permanent problem of expelling Aḥmad Abdālī gave great satisfaction. But there is no remedy against the fate by which such a famous and experienced Viceroy should die in that province leaving it without a chief." *Tārīkh-i-Aḥmad Shāhī*, 257-58.

2. *Tārīkh-i-Aḥmad Shāhī*, 257-58. cf. Sarkar, i. 439.

It was "a plain proof of the miserable state of affairs at Delhi, that in such difficult times children and women were thought capable of being entrusted with places of such high importance." *Baron Hügel's Travels*, 265.

3. *Tārīkh-i-Aḥmad Shāhī*, 282-83; Siyar, iii. 50; *Tārīkh-i-Salāṭīn-i-Afghānān*, 156; Muzaffarī, 89a; *Khazāna-i-'Āmira*, 98; *Irshād-ul-Mustaqīm*, 295a; *Tārīkh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 111.

Francklin in his *History of the Reign of Shah Aulum* states:—

"Mohim ool Moolk the subahdar of Lahore, received a fall from his horse in hunting which put an end to his life. His begum, a lady of great spirit, had interest enough amongst the chiefs of the Province to procure their nomination of her to the subahdaree in the place of her deceased husband." p. 5.

4. BHIKĀRĪ KHĀN REVOLTS (JANUARY 1754)

BHIKĀRĪ KHĀN, surnamed Raushan-ud-Daulah, Rustam Jang, was a Turkish General; and was "the dearest friend and most trusted factotum of Mu'īn," and centre of all affairs in the province during his regime.[1] He had expected that he would be nominated as the Deputy Governor. Being disappointed in his ambition, and seeing his rival Mumin Khan in power, he was naturally stung to fury. He approached the Delhi Wazīr, Intiẓām-ud-Daulah, the Begam's husband's brother, who was opposed to his sister-in-law. He granted the Deputy Governorship to Bhikārī Khan under his own signature, but the Mughlānī Begam refused to recognise this order.[2]

He aimed at seizing the government of the Punjab for himself by force, gave up attending the court, began collecting troops, mostly the turbulent Afghans of Kasur, mounted guns on the terrace of his house and openly defied the authority of the Begam.[3] In order to show that he wielded the real power, and to obtain wealth, he seized money from people in every possible way. With a view to perpetuate his memory, and probably to win over the favour of Muslims, he built a mosque, called the Golden Mosque, which stands as a monument of him to the present day.[4]

The masterful Begam could not tolerate the refractory attitude of such a powerful court noble, the success of whom would have nipped her ambition in the bud. She cunningly seduced the Mughalia captains of the army to her side by increasing their pay and conferring titles[5] upon them. She even succeeded in breaking Khwājah Mirzā Khān from Bhikārī Khān's party by appointing him to the charge of the Aminabad district. Then a plot was hatched. Khwājah Mirzā Khān suddenly entered Lahore and arrested Bhikārī Khān. He was closely confined in the palace under the Guard of Khwājah Sa'īd Khān.[6]

5. QĀSIM KHĀN'S REVOLT (*c.* MARCH 1754)

THE utter weakness of the Delhi Empire and the rule of a woman so emboldened the Turki Generals in Lahore that each of them regarded

1. Siyar, iii. 51. "مختار و مدار المهام سرکار معین الملك بود" cf. *Tārīkh-i-Aḥmad Shāhī*, 9; Sarkar i. 439.

2. *Tārīkh-i-Aḥmad Shāhī*, 318-19, 337; Sarkar, ii. 52; *Tārīkh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 111.

3. Miskīn, 91.

4. A poet wrote the following verse secretly on the gate of the mosque :—

"بنا کرد مسجد بهکاری بلشت - ز راززنده بگرفت و از مرده خشت"

("Bhikārī Khān built a mosque, by seizing money from the living and bricks from the dead.") The Nawāb read the verse, fell into a rage, and ordered the execution of the poet, on whom no search could lay hands. Sohan Lal, i. 139.

5. Miskīn, 91.

6. Miskīn, 91-92; Ghulām Alī, 26; Siyar, iii. 61; Husain Shāhī, 34; *Khazāna-i-'Āmira*, 99; Muzaffarī, 89a; Khushwaqt Rai, 89; *Tārīkh-i-'Alī*, 131.

himself capable of carving out a principality, and maintaining it with the help of his tribesmen from Central Asia and the Sikh soldiers of the Punjab. " They felt that their own rule would be worthier and more conducive to the safety and happiness of their retainers and subjects than the anarchy which prevailed in Lahore from Mughlānī Begam's follies and vices."[1]

Bhikārī Khān's revolt was followed by that of Qāsim Khān, a Turk, who had enlisted himself as a soldier in the service of Mu'īn. He rose to the position of a Jamadar, and was the first to render valuable service to the Mughlānī Begam against Bhikārī Khān. Consequently, he was appointed by her to the faujdari of Patti parganah in Lahore district. Qāsim Khān, who was lovingly called her son by the Mughlānī Begam was provided with some pieces of cannon, 300 *jizairchis* who were Badakhshanis and had just arrived in the Punjab to seek their livelihood, 100 Turki cavalry, a few thousand horse and foot and several thousand rupees in cash at the time of his appointment.[2]

Qāsim Khān also secured permission from the Begam to take Tahmāsp Khān Miskīn in his train. Qāsim Khān made the first day's halt at Kot Lakhpat, two kos from Lahore, where Miskīn joined him the next day. Just at this place began the Faujdar's encounters with the Sikhs who had been rising to power for sometime past.[3]

> " After a few days Qāsim Khān placed one of his brothers named 'Ālim Beg Khān at the head of 1,000 horse and foot to lead an attack by way of *chapawal* on a village where the Sikhs had assembled. The Sikhs got ready, and a fight began in which the perseverance of 'Ālim Beg Khān gave way, and finding himself unequal to the task he returned, giving up all his 300 Badakhshani foot soldiers to slaughter. On learning this news, Qāsim Khān mounted and started for the place.....We reached our troops safely that day. The next day I gave a piece of advice to Qāsim Khān but he did not agree and some hot words passed between us. Thereupon I came back to Lahore.
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> " After a few days he also marched back from this place without achieving anything and having suffered extreme hardships and difficulties. He halted on the bank of the river (Ravi), five kos from Lahore. I went to see him. He said, 'I have won over 8,000 Sikhs by friendly negotiations. I will soon seize Lahore, and then after enlisting more troops will take Delhi and will make myself Padishah.' He offered the Chancellorship to a penniless Khwājah, the fugitive ex-Faujdar of Saharanpur, and the Imperial

1. Sarkar, ii. 52.
2. Miskīn, 93 ; Sarkar, ii. 52-53.
3. 'Alī-ud-Dīn, 117a.

"گروہ سنگھان از سبب سُستی عمل بیگم صاحبہ و عزل و نصب نا ثبان سنگھان غلبہ گرفتہ بود ند"

Paymaster-Generalship to me, while then I was a lad of fifteen only. I told him that such useless talk did not become him, and that he would repent it in a few days. After five days he left the place and encamped outside the city (Lahore) near Shah Balawal. I again paid him a visit. He had nothing left with him. He uselessly distributed thousands of rupees worth of matchlocks, bows and other arms and materials and gifts to his Sikh allies, while his own troopers clamoured for their pay. They besieged him and insulted him. The same day they cut off his tent ropes, and dragged him to the Begam, who confined him within her palace enclosure and kept him under strict guard."[1]

6. MUḤAMMAD AMĪN KHĀN DIES (MAY 1754)

THE Begam had succeeded in removing the threat of civil war, but another catastrophe soon befell her. The baby-Governor Muḥammad Amīn Khān died early in May, displaying the same symptoms of poisoning as his father.[2] The Begam at once proclaimed herself head of the government of the province. Then she despatched her agents to Kandhar as well as to Delhi to procure formal recognition of her Governorship. Her only probable opponent to this appointment was 'Imād-ul-Mulk, the Delhi Wazīr to whom her daughter had been betrothed by Mu'īn. Her messengers reached there at the time when the Emperor Aḥmad Shāh was busy in his struggle against 'Imād-ul-Mulk, and so he could not pay any attention to the Punjab affairs. His successor 'Ālamgīr II appointed Mumin Khān as Governor of the Punjab on the 25th October 1754, but his authority was negatived by the Begam, in whose hands lay all the strings of power.[3]

7. MISGOVERNMENT OF THE BEGAM

MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM securely established herself in the seat of the provincial government for the time being; but those were not the times when a female Viceroy could display much activity in controlling the affairs of the administration. The reasons were that the Turkish nobles could not bear the idea of a woman's rule;[4] and in the second place the whole province was in a state of utter chaos and confusion. Eunuchs

1. Miskīn, 94-96.

2. "Many people believed that Bhikārī Khān poisoned the innocent (child) through the eunuch Zammurrad who had access to him." Miskīn, 97-98. (This news reached Delhi on the 2nd June 1754. *Delhi Chronicle*, 92).

3. Miskīn, 93-97; *Tārikh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 111.

4. *Ma'āsir-ul-Umarā*, i. 360.

Even her great ally and maternal uncle hesitated to accept her authority

were the only medium through whom Mughlānī Begam conducted the state affairs, and therefore it became to all intents and purposes eunuchs' rule at Lahore.[1] The Dīwān, Bakhshī, and other high officials first went in the morning to Mumin Khān to offer their salaams, and then all, including the Deputy, proceeded to the *deorhi* (portico) of the Begam's palace and received her orders through eunuchs. Three eunuchs—Mian Khushfaham, Mian Arjmand and Mian Maḥabbat—took the lead in these discussions, and became her chief confidants in all affairs great and small. Matters were made worse by the fact that these eunuchs seldom agreed among themselves, and constantly quarrelled.[2]

The result was that the administration fell into disorder, and disturbances raised their head everywhere.

The government of the country had visibly broken up. Multan was under a separate Governor of Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī. The four mahals of Gujrat, Aurangabad, Pasrur and Sialkot were ruled over by Rustam Khān directly appointed by the Durrānī. The northern districts of Amritsar, Batala, Kalanaur and Pathankot were the strongholds of the Sikhs. Ādīna Beg Khān was supreme in the Jullundur Doab and he acknowledged no authority of the Lahore government. The country between the Sutlej and the Jumna was under the Delhi Emperor. The only districts which owed allegiance to the Lahore Governor were situated in its close neighbourhood, and these were about to be occupied by various Mughalia captains.[3]

8. REVOLT OF KHWĀJAH MIRZĀ KHĀN (*c.* DECEMBER 1754)

KHWĀJAH MIRZĀ KHĀN, an Uzbak chief, had possessed the complete confidence of his late master Mu'īn-ul-Mulk and was often given independent charge of expeditions against the Sikhs. He commanded a personal contingent of 300 Uzbaks, besides many others. On Mu'īn's death he had joined the party of Bhikārī Khān, but was soon enticed away by the imperious Begam, who had conferred upon him the faujdari of Aminabad with the title of Khān. Here the Khwājah asserted his personality, crushed all opposition, "chastised the Sikhs in several engagements"[4] and established peace and order in the region in his charge.

The captive Bhikārī Khān entered into communication with Khwājah Muḥammad Sa'īd Khān and decided that "as a fissure had appeared in

1. Miskīn, 93.

2. Ibid., 98. "Owing to the widow regent's simplicity each officer represented affairs to her in a different way. Eunuchs and slaves ruled the State. The peasants were in a more ruinous condition than before. The administration fell into disorder and decay and the number of the Sikhs increased in consequence." Siyar, iii. 51; Sarkar, i. 440.

3. Khushwaqt Rai, 89. About the Begam's authority in the Punjab, Francklin remarks: "Lahore, the key of Hindostaun, was governed by a woman." *History of the Reign of Shah Aulum*, p. 5.

4. Miskīn, 102.

the family honour of the late Nawāb," the best course for them was to call Khwājah Mirzā Khān to take over charge of the administration of the province.

Consequently, he came to Lahore, won over the Begam's soldiers already corrupted by Khwājah Sa'īd, confined her in another house and emptied her palace of all cash, jewels, ornaments, clothes and other things.[1] On the following morning the *Purbia* foot-soldiers, about seven or eight thousand in number, attacked the Mirzā's troops, but were repulsed after some struggle. The Mughlānī Begam was then removed from her official residence and confined in her mother's house.[2] Khwājah Mirzā utterly failed in effectively controlling the administration, in securing sufficient revenues, and in checking the forces of disruption among his fellow tribesmen, and consequently the local chiefs and rebels became quite independent in their own spheres of activity.[3] He, however, took effective measures in punishing the Sikhs. His brother Khwājah Qāzī with his 6,000 troops was despatched after them and defeated them.[4]

9. BHIKĀRĪ KHĀN IS PUT TO DEATH (APRIL 1755)

THE Mughlānī Begam, finding herself ousted from authority and a captive, burned with rage against Khwājah Mirzā and Bhikārī Khān, the real instruments of her ruin. She, therefore, cleverly managed to depute her ambassador to the court of Kandhar. Khwājah 'Abdullah Khān, her mother's brother and the younger son of the former Viceroy 'Abdul Samad Khān and the younger brother of the late Nawāb Zakariyā Khān went to Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī's court, complained against the Mughalia nobles who had been responsible for all the misrule, tumult

1. Miskīn, 103.

He then brought the Begam to her palace and appointed his own soldiers at the gate. "At that time I, Miskīn, and Muḥammad 'Āqil dressed in a coat of arms, went to the portico of the Begam and conveyed an oral message through eunuchs that Khwājah Mirzā and Bhikārī Khān were sitting together, and if they were ordered they could kill both of them instantly with one stroke." But they were forbidden to carry out such a plan.

2. Ibid., 104.

Khwājah Mirzā Khān declared himself Nawāb (Subahdar), put a studded aigrette on his head and granted titles of Khān and Khil'ats to his comrades, the Mughal captains. 'Ashūr 'Ali Khān and even Bhikārī Khān came to offer salaams to Khwājah Mirzā after eight days. The other Mughalia sardars, such as Bālā Bāsh Khān, Farmān Beg Khān, Ibrāhīm Qulī Khān, Ismāil Khān and others, who had been his equals in rank and position, and quite independent of each other, caring nothing for anybody, also came to pay their respects and produced all the documents before him for orders and signatures. After a few days their mutual jealousy and enmity began to reappear. In spite of their repeated promises of friendship and unity at dinners and entertainments of the dancing girls, they soon gave way to disagreement."

3. Cf. Sarkar, ii, 56.

4. Miskīn (who was present in these campaigns), 105.

and disorder in the Punjab since Mu'īn's death, and obtained an order on Amān Khān, brother of Jahān Khān, the Durrānī Governor of Peshawar, to march to Lahore at the head of 10,000 troops and restore the Begam to authority. Khwājah Mirzā was easily overpowered and imprisoned with most of his nobles. Lahore was given over to plunder and was thoroughly sacked.[1] Then the Begam was installed on the Gaddi and Khwājah 'Abdullah was appointed her deputy. Bhikārī Khān was made over to the Mughlānī Begam. He was severely beaten with shoes and cudgels and the eunuchs striking him blow after blow cried out : " The blood of the two (Mu'īn and Amīn) is on you. This is your due recompense for it."[2] Thus he was killed[3] and his corpse was thrown outside the city into a ditch.[4]

10. KHWĀJAH 'ABDULLAH OUSTS THE BEGAM (*c.* JULY 1755)

AMĀN KHĀN had carried away the turbulent Mughalia nobles, including Khwājah Mirzā, to Kandhar. Khwājah 'Abdullah, finding no rival in Lahore, employed 15 to 20 thousand horse and foot and assumed an independent attitude. The Begam could not be thwarted so easily and she seduced 'Abdullah's soldiery on promise of rewards and higher pay. 'Abdullah, however, with the help of Mīr Mumin and the Durrānī agent Hādī Khān, succeeded in confining the Begam to her mother's house and thus became the undisputed master of Lahore. He badly needed funds to keep his soldiery satisfied. The treasury did not bring him much and therefore he resorted to tyranny and oppression of all sorts in exacting money from the people.[5] " Closing the gates of the city, he plundered much from the inhabitants of Lahore both Hindus and Muslims, on the plea of their having been associates of Bhikārī Khān, and slew many people. Vast numbers were ruined. Grain and other commodities became very dear."[6]

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1. Miskīn, 107. About forty lakhs of rupees were obtained in this way. Khushwaqt Rai, 89.

2. Miskīn, 107.

3. James Browne in his *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs* on p. 18 writes :—

" In the year of the Hegira 1165, Moin-ul-Mullock died, and his widow appointed one Beckery Khān to manage the government of her deceased husband, as Naib (or deputy) on her part ; but having detected him in a design to seize on her person, and usurp the government himself, she caused him to be strangled."

4. Miskīn, 106-108 ; *Tārīkh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 112 ; *Khazāna-i-'Āmira*, 99 ; Siyar, iii. 51 ; Ghulām Alī (Bhikārī Khān's son and the author of *Shah 'Ālam Nāmah*), 26 ; *Tārīkh-i-Muzaffarī*, 89a ; Khushwaqt Rai 89 ; *Tārikh-i-Aḥmad*, 9 ; *Tārīkh-i-Ālī*, 131 ; Sohan Lal, in i. 139 ; Alī-ud-Dīn, 113a ; Sarkar, ii. 56-57.

5. Miskīn, 109-110 ; *Khazāna-i-'Āmira*, 99 ; *Tārīkh-i-Muzaffarī*, 89a ; Sohan Lal, i. 139-40 ; Sarkar, ii. 57-58.

6. *Tārīkh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 112.

11. ĀDĪNA BEG KHĀN CAPTURES LAHORE (*c.* SEPTEMBER 1755)

IN the meantime Ādīna Beg Khān, the Governor of the Jullundur Doab, had firmly established himself in that territory, and owned allegiance neither to Lahore Government under which he was politically placed, nor to the Delhi Sovereign. He had recently (April 1755) defeated Qutb Shāh Rohilla who had revolted against the Delhi Emperor and had seized upon the Sirhind province, and thus Ādīna Beg had become the supreme master of the country situated between the Beas and the Jumna, known as the Jullundur Doab and the Sirhind Sarkar.[1] Lahore also offered a favourable opportunity and Ādīna Beg was not the man to let slip such a chance. The provincial capital was in the throes of revolution. Khwājah 'Abdullah's rule was hated by all. So Ādīna Beg led his army against Lahore. Khwājah 'Abdulla fled away to Sind without offering any resistance. Ādīna Beg captured the capital, appointed Sādiq Beg Khān his deputy, and himself came back to Jullundur.

12. MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM IS MADE CAPTIVE BY THE DELHI WAZĪR (MARCH 1756)

MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM could not bear the loss of her political power. She was very resourceful. Feeling the need for immediate assistance she turned her attention to the all-powerful Delhi Wazīr 'Imād-ul-Mulk, who had been betrothed to her daughter in Mu'īn's lifetime. She wrote to him:—"Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī helped me from Kandhar, whenever I was oppressed, I have again fallen into misfortune. Please come and help me. Otherwise at least send a force in any way you can, and summon my daughter who is betrothed to you."[2]

'Imād-ul-Mulk welcomed this opportunity of having an occasion to interfere in Punjab affairs and settle matters in his own way. He knew that the Begam was mismanaging affairs. The Wazīr was facing financial break-down, and badly needed money which he thought might be procurable from Lahore. He also wanted to regain that last province for the empire, although he did not care much for the Begam's daughter, as he was already married to the greatest beauty of the day, Gannā Begam.

The Wazīr did not like to rouse alarm, and pretending to go on a hunting expedition in the jungle of Hansi and Hisar left Delhi in the company of Prince 'Alī Gauhar on the 15th January 1756. He reached

1. For details cf. *Tārīkh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 76-88; *Delhi Chronicle*, 122; *Chahar Gulzar Shujai*, 461a; *Tārīkh-i-Muzaffarī*, 98b-99a; *Aḥwāl-i-Ādīna Beg Khān*, 56b-57a.

2. Miskīn, 113-114.

Sirhind on the 7th February 1756 where his further progress was stopped by Ādīna Beg Khān who wrote to him :—" Please stay at Sirhind. Send a eunuch with two or three thousand troops to me. I will add my own contingent to them, and will secure you possession of Lahore easily by a stratagem. There is a large army in Lahore. If you go there, it may cause tumult and a rising."[1]

Accordingly, 'Imād-ul-Mulk sent the eunuch Nasīm Khān at the head of a few thousand troops, and himself stayed at Machhiwara on the bank of the Sutlej. " Ādīna Beg Khān despatched Sādiq Beg Khān with 10,000 troops of his own to help the Wazīr and all these soldiers combined arrived at Lahore in a few days, and were housed at Shah Ganj. From here they rode out in full splendour and pomp to the Begam's residence to offer their salaams. On returning they paid a visit of courtesy to Khwājah 'Abdullah Khān, brother of Khān Bāhadur and son of 'Abdul Samad Khān. The Khwājah, in accordance with court etiquette, conferred upon Sādiq Beg Khān, the leader of the expedition, a *khil'at* and afterwards came to the (camp of the) troops.

He guessed that in a day or two he would be captured, and being frightened left the city the same night and fled to the Jammu hills."[2]

On the following day Mughlānī Begam triumphantly occupied her official residence and took the reins of government into her hands once more. The Wazīr's letter was then delivered to her in which he had requested her to send him her daughter. The Begam was pleased with the request. She took nearly a month in making preparations for the departure of her daughter 'Umda Begam, " the pearl of unrivalled beauty and accomplishments,"[3] and sent her with a suitable dowry in jewels and cash accompanied by a full household of eunuchs, tents and other necessary requisites at the head of an escort of 3,000 troops. The bride arrived at the camp of the Wazīr on the 4th March 1756.[4]

The next step the Wazīr took was to despatch Sayyid Jamīl-ud-Dīn Khān and others to Ādīna Beg in order to fetch the Begam also to his camp.

These officers strengthened by Ādīna's troops covered the distance of 120 miles in one day and night, hardly stopping to take breath, and reached Lahore at daybreak when the Mughlānī Begam was fast asleep, unsuspicious of what lay in store for her. They sent eunuchs to wake her and putting her in a close chair they carried her to their camp outside Lahore and confiscated all her treasure and property. She reached the Wazīr's camp on the 28th March 1756. The Wazīr came to receive her. Hurt by the treatment she had received, she let loose

1. Miskīn, 114; cf. *Delhi Chronicle*, 130; *Khazāna-i-Āmira*, 52; *Tārikh-i-Muzaffarī*, 98b; Ma'āsir-ul-Umarā, iii. 890.

2. Miskīn, 114; cf. *Tārikh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 151.

3. Sohan Lal, i. 140.

4. Miskīn, 114-116 and 119; *Tārikh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 130-31; Shākir, 79-80; Siyar, iii. 53; *Delhi Chronicle*, 131; Sarkar, ii, 60.

her tongue and in a loud voice reviled and abused the Wazīr, saying: "This conduct of yours will bring distress upon the realm, destruction to Shahjahanabad and disgrace to the nobles and the state. Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī will soon avenge this disgraceful act and punish you." The Wazīr then gave the government of Lahore and Multan to Ādīna Beg Khān in return for a tribute of thirty lakhs a year, appointed Sayyid Jamīl-ud-Dīn Khān as Ādīna's assistant and returned to the imperial capital on the 9th May 1756.[1]

13. KHWĀJAH 'ABDULLAH INSTALLED IN LAHORE (4TH OCTOBER 1756)

SAYYID JAMĪL-UD-DĪN was assigned 5,000 troops by Ādīna Beg Khān on paper but the actual muster was much lower. The Sayyid though limited to such a small contingent and an empty treasure tried his best to establish peace and order in the country.[2] "He sought to lower the unfairly enhanced price of grain by publicly flogging the headman of the markets."[3] He was a man of courage and spirit. "Once or twice I saw with my own eyes," says Miskīn, "that he went on a hunting expedition towards the village of Sharaqpur where ten or fifteen thousand Sikhs appeared and fell on him. He commanded only about one thousand horse and foot. With this small number he stuck to his ground and repelled the Sikhs."[4]

His rule, however, was short-lived. Khwājah 'Abdullah Khān went from Jammu to Kandhar and came back with a strong force of Abdālī's troops under Jangbāz Khān who also brought with him Khwājah Mirzā and other Mughalia Jamadars, retained as captives in the Durrānī court.[5] "Ādīna Beg Khān, Faujdar of the Doab had entered into an agreement with Sayyid Jamīl-ud-Dīn Khān that in case of an emergency he would supply him with 10 or 15 thousand troops and their pay. At the time of the approach of the Durrānī troops the Sayyid sought help from the Khān who replied that in view of the large Durrānī army it was advisable for him to come to the Doab, where both of them would act with mutual consultation. The Nawāb followed his advice and left the place. I, Miskīn, also left all my goods and property in Lahore and taking women only accompanied him."[6]

1. Miskīn, 120-24; *Tārīkh-i-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 131; *Delhi Chronicle*, 131-32; *Khazāna-i-'Āmira*, 52; Ma'āsir, iii. 890-91; Siyar, iii. 53; *Muzaffarī*, 98b; Ghulam 'Alī, 26-27; Shiv Parshad, 33b; Shākir, 79-80; 'Ibrat Miqāl, ii. 71a-b; *Tārīkh-ī-Salāṭīn-i-Afghānān*, 156; Bakhtmal, 76; Sohan Lal, i. 139-40; *Gulistān-i-Raḥmat*, 51; 'Alī-ud-Dīn, 113a-114a; Sarkar, ii. 60-61.

2. Cf. Bakhtmal, 76; Khushwaqt Rai, 90; Sohan Lal, i. 140.

3. Sarkar, ii. 61.

4. Miskīn, 124.

5. *Tārīkh-ī-'Ālamgīr Sānī*, 151-52.

6. Miskīn, 125.

All the citizens of Lahore fled with or without porters in company with Jamīl and a great calamity befell the city.[1] The invaders entered Lahore on the 4th October 1756. Khwājah 'Abdullah Khān was given charge of the province with Khwājah Mirzā as his assistant. The city was thoroughly plundered and laid waste by the Afghans.[2] But the new chiefs were not allowed to enjoy undisturbed possession of the Lahore province. They were constantly harassed by the Sikhs, and regular expeditions were sent after them under the leadership of Khwājah Mirzā. When Miskīn came back from Jullundur to Lahore to take his goods and property he found Khwājah Mirzā out on one of such expeditions to Aminabad.[3]

14. AḤMAD SHĀH DURRĀNĪ IS INVITED TO INVADE INDIA

CONSTANT reports of the utter wretchedness of the Delhi government were reaching Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī and from many high authorities he received invitations to invade India. The Mughlānī Begam, who had been ousted from her authority in the Punjab by the Delhi Wazīr, wrote to him through Jahān Khān, his Governor of Peshawar: "I am ruined by the treachery of Mīr Mumin Khān, Ādīna Beg Khān and Sayyid Jamīl-ud-Dīn Khān. Goods and cash worth crores of rupees lie buried to my knowledge in the palace of my late father-in-law (Wazīr Qamr-ud-Dīn Khān), besides heaps of gold and silver stored between the ceilings. A perfect disagreement exists between the Emperor 'Ālamgīr II and his Wazīrs and nobles. If you invade India this time, the Indian Empire with all its riches will fall into your hands without your incurring any expenditure."[4]

At the same time Najīb-ud-Daulah who had been besieged by the Marathas in his fort of Sukartal wrote to him: "I too am an Afghan, and you ought to preserve the honour of Afghans in this country. I have gathered round myself 25,000 Afghans. I have prepared the other Afghans of *Gangapār* (Trans-Ganges), who number 40,000, to enter into your service. You may come here without any misgivings. 'Imād-ul-Mulk has not the strength to oppose you. I am his greatest ally. If I am obedient to you there is none other left here (to help him.)"[5]

Besides, 'Ālamgīr II who was raised to the throne only as an instrument of 'Imād-ul-Mulk's ambition, was kept by him in utter dependence, being surrounded by the Wazīr's creatures. He was not allowed to stir out without his leave. In order to extricate himself from such confine-

1. *Tārīkh-ī-Ālamgīr Sānī*, 152.
2. Sarkar, ii. 63.
3. Miskīn, 126.
4. 'Alī-ud-Dīn, 114b.
5. Nūr-ud-Dīn, 14b.

ment, he too took advantage of 'Imād's absence from the capital and wrote privately to the Durrānī to come to his assistance.[1]

Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī readily embraced the occasion that promised him such evident advantages. He sent his envoy Qalandar Beg Khān in advance to the court of Delhi, demanding satisfaction against the Wazīr's conduct in encroaching upon his province of Lahore. This envoy was granted audience on the 31st October and the 23rd November and he ultimately left Delhi on the 9th December without achieving anything.[2]

The Abdālī King himself left Kandhar early in autumn and arrived at Peshawar early in November. From here he despatched his advance guard ahead of him under Timūr Shāh, his son, and Jahān Khān his Commander-in-chief. The vanguard crossed the Indus, halted at Hasan Abdal and collected provisions for the main army in the city of Gujrat. These troops then marched in pursuit of Ādīna Beg Khān and plundered the districts of Aminabad, and Batala. Ādīna Beg fled and took refuge in the Siwalik hills, north of Hoshiarpur.

15. BEGAM'S DOINGS DURING THE ABDĀLĪ'S INVASION (JANUARY-APRIL 1757)

IN the course of all his previous incursions the Durrānī had experienced active opposition from the Punjab Subahdar and the efforts of the Delhi court in checking his advance. On this occasion, however, the empire had gone to such rack and ruin that no one tried to impede his march and not a single Indian soldier came forward to oppose him, till he easily found himself in the imperial capital where everybody lay at his mercy. "The Wazīr, who wielded the empire without a sharer in his power, took no step to meet the danger; he refused to go to Sirhind to oppose the invasion, but consulted darvishes how to overcome the enemy through their prayers without fighting."[3] The only measure that he took was to send Mughlānī Begam from Delhi to meet the Durrānī and pacify his anger.[4] She started at the head of about 400 horse including Miskīn and met the invader at Karnal. He, however, pursued his onward march taking the Begam with him.[5]

Āghā 'Alī Razā Khān had been sent as an envoy to Abdālī with gifts worth two lakhs of rupees to dissuade him from coming to Delhi on the 20th December. He came back from the Durrānī camp on the 14th January 1757 "with the doleful message that the Afghan invader had demanded two crores of rupees in cash, the hand of the Emperor's daughter, and all the territory from Sirhind westwards, as the condition

1. Francklin's *Shah Aulum*, 4-5.
2. *Delhi Chronicle*, 135; *Tārīkh-ī-Ālamgīr Sānī*, 152.
3. Sarkar, ii. 86.
4. Miskīn, 131-37; cf. Khair-ud-Dīn, 42.
5. *Tārīkh-ī-'Ālamgīr, Sānī*, 161.

of his going back, and that he had severely censured the Delhi Government for provoking his invasion when they could not fight but were bent on making terms."[1]

Najīb joined the invader at Narela on the 16th January and 'Imād presented himself in the Abdālī camp on the 19th. The Abdālī granted him audience on the 20th and severely reprimanded him asking how the first officer of the Empire of Hindustan could make abject submission without striking even one blow to save the nation's credit.[2] Afterwards he was taken in the Shāh's train as a captive.

Abdālī entered Delhi on the 28th January 1757. From that day his troops commenced plundering and sacking the city mercilessly. After torturing some noblemen reputed to be very rich the Shāh charged a regular levy from every inhabitant of Delhi and his army ravaged the whole country-side up to Agra. On the 20th February, Mughlānī Begam presented Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī with costly jewels placed in several trays as her personal offering. The Afghan King was greatly delighted, and out of high glee he cried out: "Hitherto I had styled you my daughter; but from today I shall call you my son and give you the title of Sulṭān Mirzā." He immediately conferred upon her his own tiara (*kulah*), aigrette, cloak and other vestments that he was then wearing.[3]

Finding the Durrānī so pleased with her, she requested him to restore his favour to 'Imād-ul-Mulk, and to reinstate him in the office of the Wazīr. The Abdālī replied: "I can confer the Wazīrship on him, but I understand that he has not yet married your daughter." The Begam informed him that the ceremony was going to be performed that night. Consequently Aḥmad Shāh ordered Shāh Valī Khān and Jahān Khān to make preparations for the occasion, and in the night (20-21 February) married 'Imād to Umda Begam in his own presence. He gave as gift two lakhs of rupees, two elephants, and four horses, and bestowed the title of Farzand Khān on 'Imād. He handed over Gannā Begam, 'Imād's first wife, to Mughlānī Begam to be treated as a bond-maid. 'Imād was then installed in the office of the Wazīr.[4]

On the 22nd February Aḥmad Shāh left for Muttra and Agra to carry on a campaign in the territory of Raja Surajmal Jat, and Mughlānī Begam along with Miskīn accompanied him. In the course of this campaign, the Abdālī grew more kind to the Begam, and granted her the Jullundur Doab, Jammu, and Kashmir as her fief. She sent her agents to these places, appointed Khwājah Ibrāhīm Khān to the Governorship of Kashmir, confirmed Raja Ranjit Dev in the possession of Jammu, and invited Ādīna Beg Khān to administer the Jullundur Doab as her deputy.[5]

1. Sarkar, ii. 88-89.
2. Sarkar, ii. 93. For details of this interview see *Indian Antiquary*, 1907, p. 45.
3. Miskīn, 138.
4. Miskīn, 139; *Indian Antiquary*, 1907, pp. 46-49. *Waqa'-i-Shah 'Ālam Sānī*, p. 110.
5. Miskīn, 139.

16. THE BEGAM'S APPOINTMENT IN THE PUNJAB CANCELLED

MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM, however, soon came to know that a hoax had been played upon her, and that the whole country west of the Jumna had been placed under the charge of Abdālī's son Timūr Shāh.

She had deputed Miskīn to take the *khil'at* for Ādīna Beg Khān who lay concealed in the Siwalik hills. Miskīn presented the robe of honour and was staying with him when Ādīna Beg received an order from Timūr Shāh and a letter from Jahān Khān saying:—"Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī intended to go to the Deccan first, but afterwards he gave up this idea and conferred on us this country as far as the boundary of Sirhind (May 1757). Come and wait upon us. In case of non-compliance the whole country of the Doab will be laid waste and crushed under the hoofs of our cavalry and you will be pursued into the hills."[1]

Ādīna Beg Khān was in a predicament. He preferred the Begam's suzerainty to the overlordship of Timūr and Jahān Khān. He consulted Miskīn who advised him to postpone replying to the Prince till he received a definite communication from the Begam. Miskīn was selected to undertake this duty and he started for Kandhar where the Begam was supposed to have gone in the invader's train. He left the place, arrived at Adinanagar in three days and the next day by boat crossed the Ravi, which flowed eight kos from there. At the ford he came across an old acquaintance who informed him that the Begam had returned from Abdālī's camp, was at Sialkot a few days before and must have arrived at Lahore by then. Consequently, Miskīn reached Lahore in four days.[2]

There he came to know that Abdālī had cancelled his grant of fiefs to the Begam. He had, however, offered her an annual allowance of Rs. 30,000 with residence in Lahore. She refused this and insisted on the Jagir already given to her. The Durrānī said: "Now that your brother Timūr Shāh is the Viceroy there what will you do with the provinces?" He asked Shāh Valī Khān and Jahān Khān to persuade her, but she would not agree and accompanied him up to the bank of the Jhelum, imploring him in vain for the gift of the territories first promised. She had to come back to Lahore disappointed and lived in Sarai Hakim which had only two rooms, the rest being in ruins.[3]

17. THE BEGAM IS MALTREATED BY JAHĀN KHĀN

ON receiving no answer from Ādīna Beg Khān, Jahān Khān marched into the Doab and gave over many towns and cities to plunder and pillage.[4] Ādīna Beg Khān then agreed to undertake the administration

1. Miskīn, 145.
2. Ibid., 145-46.
3. Ibid., 147-48.
4. Ibid., 145.

of the Doab under Timūr Shāh provided that he was exempted from attending his court in Lahore.[1] Timūr Shāh, sensible of his own inexperience in the government and revenue matters, and convinced of Ādīna Beg Khān's skill in administration and local knowledge resolved to avail himself of that man's abilities. He wrote to him several civil letters, endeavouring to soothe his mind. At last he sent him the patent as well as the *khil'at* for the Governorship of the Doab in return for an annual tribute of 36 lakhs of rupees, exempting him from personal attendance at his court.[2] For surety of Ādīna Beg's conduct and the punctual payment of the tribute, his agent Dilarām was kept in Lahore in constant attendance at the court.[3]

After a couple of months a quarrel arose between Jahān Khān and Ādīna Beg Khān about the payment of the tribute. It seems that Jahān Khān was bent upon finding an excuse to call Ādīna Beg to Lahore. Ādina Beg had been in office as the Afghan deputy for only two months when Jahān Khān started making demands for the tribute. Ādīna Beg naturally insisted on paying it after the expiry of the year. Jahān Khān sent some bailiffs demanding Ādīna Beg's immediate presence in Lahore. The latter mistrusted the Afghan General and flatly refused to come. Jahān Khān at once imprisoned his agent Dilarām and demanded six lakhs of rupees. Mughlānī Begam tried to secure the agent's liberty and ultimately succeeded in her object by standing surety for the payment of the revenues. She also wrote to Ādīna Beg Khān for immediate remittance and on receiving no reply from him sent him some of her own jewels to be pawned to procure money. About this time Dilarām who was daily oppressed by the Afghan General also came to the Begam, saying: "They will kill me; I shall do whatever you advise me." The Begam took pity on him and asked him to flee from Lahore the same night, to get the money from Ādīna Beg without delay and to return immediately. Jahān Khān was furiously enraged on learning about Dilarām's escape, sent for the Begam in his own house, took a stick and is said to have beaten her severely. She was not spared till she offered him her own jewels worth six lakhs of rupees. Two hundred troopers besieged her house and took away everything they could lay their hands on, including Miskīn's property and clothes. She was confined in a small room and unspeakable oppression was done to her.[4]

18. THE BEGAM STAYS AT BATALA (JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1758)

Jahān Khān then marched into the Jullundur Doab, drove Ādīna Beg Khān into mountains and seized his territory. Ādīna Beg was

1. Miskīn, 165. "باین شرط که بملازمت حضور نخواهد آمد و بذات خود رجوع نخواهد گشت"
2. Ibid., 147.
3. Miskīn 165, *Khazāna-i-'Āmīra*, 100; Siyar, iii. 63 *Tārīkh-i-Muzaffarī*, 102a; Aḥmad Shāh, 872; *Irshād-ul-Mustaqīm*, 295a and 317a.
4. Miskīn, 168-171.

not to be cowed down so easily. He soon won over Marathas and Sikhs and with their assistance expelled the Afghans from Lahore on the 9th April 1758. On the approach of the Marathas Jahān Khān transferred his camp to Shahdara on the opposite bank of the Ravi, taking Mughlānī Begam and her maiden daughter with him. When the Maratha and Sikh forces reached Lahore, Miskīn quietly managed to bring the Begam and her daughter back to Lahore in a covered conveyance (ڈولی) and admitted them into their residential quarters.[1]

After the withdrawal of the Afghans the Marathas appointed Ādīna Beg Khān Viceroy of the Punjab for an annual tribute of 75 lakhs of Rupees. Ādīna Beg did not like to stay in Lahore, and preferred to set up his headquarters at Batala. He left his son-in-law Khwāja Mirzā Khān in charge of the provincial capital, who felt afraid of Mughlānī Begam's intrigues,[2] and requested Ādīna Beg Khān to take her with him. Ādina Beg Khān accordingly provided the Begam with a few thousand rupees, and she moved to Batala.[3]

19. MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM SETTLES AT JAMMU (OCTOBER 1758)

ONE of the redeeming features of this period of constant upheaval and chaos was the peace that prevailed in the city of Jammu, the capital of Raja Ranjit Dev, a ruler noted for justice and impartiality. In those days the centres of population had shifted from the plains of the Punjab to the submontane region for reasons of safety and security. Ranjit Dev encouraged people of all sorts to settle in Jammu from every part of the Punjab. He also granted special concessions and allowances to the courtiers and nobles of Delhi and Lahore fallen under misfortune, and extended to them various favours.[4]

1. Miskīn, 176.

2. Ibid., 179.

3. Ibid., 180.

4. Buti Shāh, 34b-35b; 'Alī-ud-Dīn, 51a. (George Forster who visited Jammu in 1783 remarks :—

"Runzeid Deve, the father of the present chief of Jumbo, who deservedly acquired the character of a just and wise ruler, largely contributed to the wealth and importance of Jumbo. Perceiving the benefits which would arise from the residence of Mahometan merchants, he held out to them many encouragements, and observed towards them a disinterested and an honourable conduct. Negative virtues only are expected from an Asiatic people and under such a sanction his subjects might deem themselves fortunate; but the chief of Jumbo went farther than the forbearance of injuries; he avowedly protected and indulged his people, particularly the Mahometans, to whom he allotted a certain quarter of the town, which was thence denominated Moghulpour; and that no reserve might appear in his treatment of them, a mosque was erected in the new colony; a liberality of disposition the more conspicuous, and conferring the greater honour on his memory, as it is the only instance of the like toleration in this part of India, and as the Kashmirians, who chiefly composed his Mahometan subjects, have been since their conversion, rigorous persecutors of the Hindoos. He was so desirous also of acquiring their confidence and esteem, that when he rode through their quarter during the time of prayer he never failed to stop his horse until the priest had concluded his ritual exclamations." *Journey from Bengal to England*, Vol. i., pp. 283-84).

The Begam went to Batala about the end of May, and Ādīna Beg Khān died there on the 15th of September 1758. The Begam was at a loss what to do, and eventually decided to settle at Jammu. When she came near the town, Raja Ranjit Dev came out to a distance of five miles to receive her. On seeing her he alighted from his horse, paid respects to the Begam, and offered her a suitable dwelling place and some allowance and lands by way of maintenance.[1]

The Begam had been granted the district of Sialkot as Jagir by Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī, and the Governor of Chahar Mahal used to pay her the revenues of the place. The death of Ādīna Beg Khān threw the province into utter disorder and the Begam to assure herself of the revenue appointed Miskīn as her agent in Sialkot. Miskīn found it extremely difficult to manage the district as the Sikhs were rising everywhere. He was ultimately captured and driven away by them, probably in October 1760. The incident is so interesting that we reproduce here a full translation of the author's narrative with a view to give an idea of the lawlessness that prevailed in the Punjab at that time. Miskīn says :—

" In the meanwhile the Governor of Chahar Mahal with 150 horse and foot came out of his city (Sialkot) to fight the Sikhs. On hearing this, after a short while, I also mounted and galloping off joined him at a distance of two kos.....When we had covered six kos (we saw that) the village was invested by nearly 4,000 Sikhs. When they saw us from a distance they left the village and rushed towards us. There was a fort in ruins nearby. All of us took shelter in it. The fight commenced. They committed violence on the village from the time of afternoon prayer till midnight.

" We spent the night with the greatest anxiety and irresolution. When the day dawned I saw that Sikhs and zamindars were running in crowds to fight us, and our men were driven back every moment. They very loudly shouted : ' Hand over Rustam Khān, Governor of Chahar Mahal to us ! ' We continued showering bullets on them for about an hour and a half, and afterwards our supply of ammunition ran short. The Sikhs growing bolder came just below the fort. In this state of helplessness we threw on them from the top of the fort clods of earth, pieces of stone, broken earthen vessels, and pieces of wood, in short, on whatever we could lay our hands. We kept them back with bravery and courage till noon, and did not allow them to approach us. At last the Sikhs climbed up the tower and began to break the walls.

" At this Rustam Khān, I and six other men, tied pieces of cloth round our waists and brandishing swords came out of the door. By chance my foot slipped near the gate, and I fell down. The Sikhs at once captured me on the spot, and a few paces ahead they took Rustam Khān also captive. One of our companions named Alahvardi

1. Miskīn, 182.

Beg was slain. By that time the number of Sikhs and zamindars had swelled to 20,000. They brought us to the village where they were originally fighting. At nightfall they demanded one lakh of rupees from me (by way of ransom). The discussion was prolonged till midnight, and ultimately the bargain was struck at Rs. 6,000. It was settled that I should go to my village the next day, give them an order on (some banker of) Jammu, and on receiving the money they would leave me safely in Jammu.

"Consequently, early next morning two or three Sikhs started for my place. About 100 other Sikhs were also going in that direction. They took me on horseback for two or three kos, and afterwards they forced me to walk. When I had gone seven kos my feet were aching, and I was feeling exhausted. Then I caught sight of Pasrur city from a distance of two or three kos. At that time the Sikh on my horse invoked the name of his Guru and said: 'O Guru! whosoever utters your name in the morning, is never disappointed in any undertaking.' On hearing this prayer I fell aweeping. I also remembered God and said: 'O most high protector! I am your humble creature. Help me now and liberate me from the hands of the Sikhs.' I was uttering this prayer when my gaze lighted on a towering fort on the way. The zamindar of that place fell upon the Sikhs with 40 or 50 armed soldiers (barqandaz), defeated them, and carried off all their plundered goods and baggage. He also brought us in his fort. At the time of the evening prayer that Sikh who was driving us sent the zamindar of the fort word that the Mughal whom he had seized was to be ransomed by the chief of the Sikhs for Rs. 6,000, and that he was responsible for that sum. On hearing this we were placed in a tower under strict vigilance."[1]

Miskīn remained in captivity for ten days, but the zamindar of the fort took him for an ordinary Mughal soldier, and finally liberated him on receiving only Rs. 200 from him. Rustam Khān was, however, subjected to greater misery, and ultimately released on the extortion of Rs. 22,000.[2]

20. MUGHLĀNĪ BEGAM RETIRES TO SANBA AND MARRIES A EUNUCH

AFTER his discomfiture by the Sikhs Miskīn came to Jammu. In his absence the Begam had appointed another eunuch named Abū Turāb Khān Kokah as her personal attendant. Miskīn found everybody wagging his tongue telling tales of the Begam's loose life with her old

1. Miskīn, 218-21.
2. Ibid., 222-24.

eunuch Shahbāz.[1] The scandal flared up sky-high, and the Begam found it impossible to continue to live at that place. Consequently, she retired to another hill called Sanba, which was not under the jurisdiction of Ranjit Dev. She left Miskīn behind to wind up her business at Jammu. Miskīn stayed there for seventeen days, and then joined the Begam. He found that his own family and all other ladies who had always lived with the Begam had been left at a place called Parmandal, while the Begam was living all alone with Shahbāz. Miskīn presented himself before the Begam who informed him that she had married Shahbāz. Miskīn felt disappointed, left her there and secured service under Zain Khān, the Governor of Sirhind.[2]

HARI RAM GUPTA.

1. Miskīn, 230.
2. Ibid., 231.

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